

Devotional Studies No. 11

The Christian Life Is Commitment to Christ

Joshua speaks to the children of Israel with the following words: “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve” (**Joshua 24:15**). Every individual is confronted with two choices—God or Satan. Apart from faith in the God who created the world, one is condemned to failure. Meaning to life itself can only be found in the One who gives life. One cannot transcend one’s humanity apart from God. If one wishes to understand himself or herself, one must begin with God’s existence. Just a perusal of the Old Testament writers reveals that none of the writers sought to prove the existence of God. They moved among ideas that presuppose God’s existence—a Being who has made fellowship available with Himself.

Fellowship with God is made accessible to individuals through faith in His Son Jesus. For the believer, one’s knowledge of God is given in the revelation of Himself in and through Christ. One’s consciousness of God’s wrath and love is unfolded, or rooted, in God’s revelation of Himself in and through Jesus Christ (**John 14:8**). The God of eternity that is revealed to humanity in Scripture is the God who formed a new community through Christ to curb sin and bring salvation to a lost and dying world (**Ephesians 1:3-14; 3:7-13**). In this new society, or fellowship of redeemed ones, God created a people for good works (**2:8**). This new community of God is to tell others about God’s saving actions in and through His Son Jesus (**1 Peter 2:9**).

When men and women refuse to recognize God’s existence and the coming of God in Christ to the world of sin, one witnesses the enigma of darkness that envelops the hearts of men and women—depravity running wild (**Romans 1:18-32**). Without a belief in the existence of God revealed in Holy Scripture, life is at the mercy of meaningless happenings. Without a consciousness of the God of the Bible revealed in Jesus, one beholds individuals who have consciences that are seared with hot irons, so to speak (**1 Timothy 4:2**). Without a belief in the Creator God, one is confronted with radical evil that permeates the hearts of men and women—evil that defeats and baffles human aspirations. Even though one cannot understand the very nature of evil, nevertheless, one can fight evil through one’s commitment to Jesus.

One’s own existence testifies to the belief that God exists. The complexities of the human body are too vast to be grasped by the finite, or limited, mind. There is heavy weight for one’s belief in God’s existence (**Romans 1:18-20**). Apart from one’s faith in God, the world presents itself as a dark mystery, or puzzle. The world of Iraq with its Islamic faith witnesses to the springs of action that lies deep in ignorance and madness,

especially among revolutionary extremists. The Christian church is to act as “light” and “salt” for the preservation and stability in society (**Matthew 5:13-16**). Christians are called out of the world to be members of God’s new kingdom of grace. Not only are Christians called into God’s new society of humanity, but they are also called upon to participate as priests to serve God (**1 Peter 2:9**). In this Scripture, Peter calls attention to responsibility: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” When one enters into Christ, one is sent back into the world to serve God there and to bring about a transfiguration in the lives of men and women for God’s glory.

Christians are called into the service of God. It is in this vein that Paul addresses the Christians in Ephesus: “I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received” (**Ephesians 4:1**). Again, Paul writes: “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us” (**2 Corinthians 5:20**). Prior to this statement, he, no doubt, startles the Corinthians by stating: “He has committed to us the message of reconciliation” (**5:19**). John addresses the seven churches of Asia this way: “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever!” (**Revelation 1:5-6**). When God calls men and women into His service, He desires their co-operation and partnership in the range of reaching out to lost humanity.

If one does not choose to commit one’s life to the cause of Christ, one soon finds himself or herself drifting in the sea of meaninglessness. One cannot live a life that is pleasing to God without commitment to His cause. The church is the abiding witness to God’s revelation of Himself in and through Christ. For some individuals who profess faith in God and Christ, the church is not very important. But loyalty to Christ implies membership in the new society of Christ, which spiritual order He founded (**Revelation 2:1—3:22**). If one withholds his or her allegiance to the work of God, one weakens his or her influence in the community of the redeemed (**1 Peter 2:12**). The fellowship of God’s people is not limited to just one’s particular local body of believers. Many Christians have shut themselves up within the walls of their own orthodoxy. Christians are to love one another even as Christ has loved them. Are you committed to Christ? Remember, Christians are called out of the world only to be sent back into the world to share God’s Good News of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus (**Colossians 1:13-14, 24-25—2:1-5**).

The church is necessary in the scheme of God’s redemptive fellowship. It is through the church that God’s way of salvation is proclaimed. The church promotes love for all. The church is an association that unites individuals with individuals through the blood of Christ shed upon Calvary for one’s redemption (**Acts 20:28**). Christians need to convey the idea that men and women are created in the “image” of God (**Genesis 1:17**). If one interprets the cosmos, or universe, in terms strictly related to humanity, one observes human beings as simply things, that is to say, human beings have no meaning, and value disappears. Islamic radicals are a classic point in which human beings have no meaning or value. When one loves another person, there is complete and unreserved commitment to one’s well being. When one is wholly committed to God, one respects life (**James 1: 26-27; I John 2:7-11; 3:11-24**) . With God, partial devotion is not enough; there must be unlimited and unconditional devotion (**Revelation 2:4-5; 3:1-3; 3:15-17**).

Whatever one hangs one's heart on and confides in is one's God. Jesus expresses it this way: "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money" (**Matthew 6:24**). And finally, one should come to grips with Jesus' statement to an expert in the Law:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.^{a 38} This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'^{b 40} All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (**Matthew 22:37-40**)

^aDeut. 6:5

^bLev. 19:18